

Measuring the Promise

A Valid and Reliable Syllabus Rubric

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We have developed a rubric which provides qualitative descriptions of 16 components that distinguish learning-focused syllabi and uses a weighted quantitative scoring system that places syllabi on a spectrum from content-focused to learning-focused. It is flexible enough to accommodate a diverse range of levels, disciplines, institutions, and learning environments yet nuanced enough to provide summative information to developers using the tool for assessment purposes and formative feedback to instructors interested in gauging the focus of their syllabi.

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE RUBRIC...

STEP 1



Identify and articulate criteria describing promising, learning-focused syllabi.



5 criteria;
16 components

STEP 2



Develop a quantitative scoring system that places syllabi on a content- to learning-focused continuum.



0 - 18 = content-focused;
41-58 = learning-focused

STEP 3



Determine validity constructs (e.g. Fink's Taxonomy, goals vs objectives, alignment) and reliability.



3 revision cycles;
< 5-pt inter-rater differences

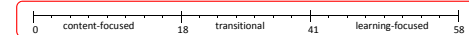
RESULT:

Palmer, M. S., Bach, D. J., & Streifer, A. C. (2014). Measuring the promise: A learning-focused syllabus rubric. *To improve the academy: A journal of educational development*, 33 (1), 14-36.

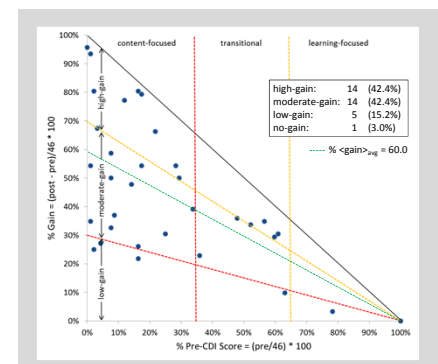
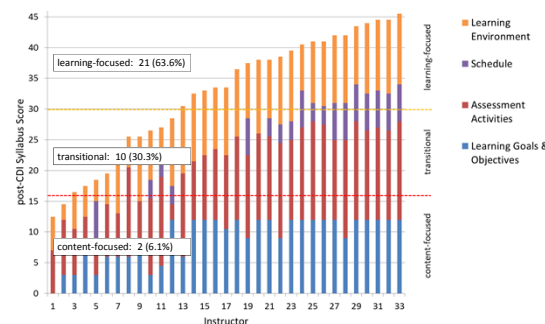
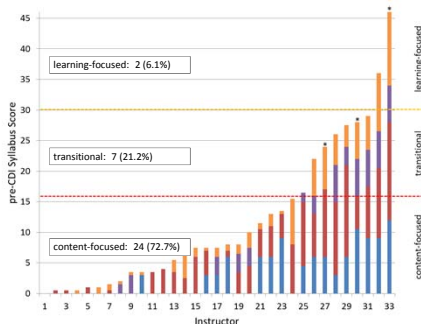
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE...

Criterion	What the component looks like	Ideas for where to look and examples of what to look for	Strength of evidence (strong, moderate, low)
Learning Goals & Objectives	3 components		
Assessment Activities	5 components		
Schedule	1 component		
Classroom Environment	4 components		
Learning Activities	3 components		

Criterion	Component	Strength of Evidence		
		Strong	Moderate	Low
Learning Goals & Objectives	1. Learning goals encompass full range of Fink's dimensions of significant learning			
	2. Course level learning objectives are clearly articulated and use specific action verbs			
	3. Learning objectives are appropriately pitched			
Assessment Activities	4. Objectives and assessments are aligned			
	5. Major summative assessment activities are clearly defined			
	6. Plans for frequent formative assessment with immediate feedback			
subtotals		(x2)	(x1)	(x0)
TOTAL				/58



A BIT OF DATA...



RESULT:

Overall: $t(32) = 10.41, p < .001$; Goals & Objectives: $t(32) = 7.53, p < .001$; Assessment Activities: $t(32) = 8.05, p < .001$; Schedule: $t(32) = 2.65, p = .006$; Classroom Environment: $t(32) = 10.62, p < .001$

RESOURCES



User Guide



Annotated Syllabi



Electronic Score Sheet



SPECIAL THANKS

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